The Righteous One

infotextmanuscripts.org/righteous_one_poem.html

And when they face you with the evidence
So overwhelming it can't be denied,
Hold your tongue, do not say in self-defence
It is for your beliefs you will be tried.

Don't say you did it for your countrymen,
Like all decent folk they spit on your name,
Don't say you did it for your children when
You've seen them cry and hang their heads in shame.

And when they pull the bodies from the wreck
Of what was once a church, a ship or plane,
When of compassion you have not a speck,
Be silent, no one wants you to explain.

Don't take your son aside and say to him:
Blood of my blood, I did this deed for you.
The photographs of severed heads and limbs
That haunt his dreams remind him that's untrue.

And when they lock you up until you rot,
Don't think yourself a martyr to the cause;
The myriad innocents you've bombed and shot
Were victims of murder, not of just wars.

Yet still you justify your bloody spree
Claiming that out of evil will come good,
Just when and how it will we've yet to see,
(Who but a madman would believe it could?)

The perverse, twisted logic of your kind
Is so sick the imagination reels,
That any fanatic could be so blind:
None stoop so low as those with *high ideals*.